Fall 1987

THE LEXINGTON SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

TLS

Konnichi Wa

Two Lexington School Teachers Broaden Their Horizons

Last summer, Libby Geddes and Sara Meekins, members of the lower school faculty, enrolled in a graduate course offered by the Center for Economic Education at the University of Kentucky. The title of the course was "Modern Educational Problems: Economic Education in Japan." The course description was irresistible. It was being taught in Japan! Twenty-five educators and business people from Central Kentucky left Lexington in June to experience as much as they could in the Land of the Rising Sun.



Libby Geddes and Sara Meekins in front of the memorial to Sadako at Hiroshimo Peace Park.

Mrs. Geddes, who has taught at The Lexington School for 17 years, has included an in-depth unit on Japan in her 3rd Grade Social Studies curriculum for several years. Her children cover Japanese history, geography, arts and crafts, foods and music. Their studies are coordinated with their co-curricular teachers so that they are literally immersed in the country they are studying.

What this trip added to Mrs. Geddes' existing resources was a personal fund of knowledge about the Japanese economy. Visits to the Bank of Tokyo, the Tokyo Stock Exchange, and Toyota's manufacturing facilities and executive headquarters provided fascinating glimpses into the business culture. Mrs. Geddes explains to her students that Japanese businessmen do not do business with strangers. Getting to know a person is a basic prerequisite to a process which begins with an exchange of business cards and culminates with the exchange of gifts. Mrs. Geddes and Mrs. Meekins took a variety of gifts with The Lexington School emblem on them to their Japanese hosts.

Our teachers also took 1,000 origami paper cranes to Japan in their suitcases. These cranes were all folded by our students and placed by their teachers on the Children's Statue for A-Bomb Victims at Hiroshima Peace Park. This effort was the result of students studying about Sadako, the young girl who has become a symbol for all the children who lost their lives in 1945 or who have died since that time. The legend states that if you can fold 1,000 paper cranes, you will get well.

Mrs. Meekins says she will never forget her experience with the Toyota executives. She was overwhelmed by the respect the Japanese have for teachers and by the way her group was received. It was almost as if they were royalty. The Kentucky teachers in the group were asked to "be a bridge between our cultures" and to "take care of our children." This is what Mrs. Meekins hopes the trip has enabled her to do. She feels that as more Japanese families move into our school

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From the Headmaster: *by David Lowry*



Parenting is the most complex task in the spectrum of human relationships. One feels powerful responsibility to do a good, if not a terrific, job. With the current emphasis on careers and "success," it is crucial to remember that parenting does fall into the category of "gainful employment."

Child rearing certainly has one of the vaguest and most diffuse of job descriptions. There are no promotions, no raises and little in the way of evaluation or bonuses.

It is a tough, demanding career with 24-hour days, lots of anxiety and self-doubt and little or no vacation time. Sick days cannot be accrued, personal days do not exist and the financial benefit package is yet to be developed.

Perhaps the hardest aspect of the job is that it is almost impossible for parents to know if they have accomplished what they set out to do. Results of their efforts may not come for years afterward, when so many other variables have had an impact on the final product.

But what could be more important than raising the next generation? While bringing up young children may not be a lifelong career with a clearly marked professional path, it is one of society's most crucial responsibilities.

As we raise our children, I think it is crucial that we constantly keep in mind the final goal, for the view toward the end helps us negotiate the present. The final goal is an independent and responsible adult.

As we move from day to day with our children, do we seize each opportunity to push them toward this end? Do we insist that they do for themselves everything they are able to do or do we fall too quickly back into the role of caretaker and servant? Do we give them chores and tasks within the family and home or do we treat them like guests? Do we insist upon their behaving with respect toward others or do we brush off rudeness and inconsideration as "a stage?" Do we encourage our children to speak up and fight their own battles, or do we rush in and try to smooth everything over for them?

For parents, reference to these questions can point the way to a more effective handling of a difficult situation with a youngster. And there just may be a real bonus in it for both you and your child.

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community, understanding their culture will be essential to helping them as they come to understand us.

Using what they learned in their experiences this summer for classroom instruction, participating in workshops for other Kentucky teachers, and presenting programs in the community at large are ways in which Mrs. Geddes and Mrs. Meekins are sharing their very special trip. Both faculty members feel privileged to have experienced Japan.

SAVE THIS DATE!

Alumni Reception

Monday, December 21, 1987

4:00 - 6:00 p.m.



Whitney Bentley, Shelley Tamadonni, Taylor Baker and Emmy Gambet enjoy authentic Japanese cuisine.

In the limelight:

Science Department, Please Take a Bow

Hands-on, laboratory science classes are usually an occassional treat for children in grades 1 through 6. Not so at The Lexington School. The Science Department offers a curriculum which was developed by leading science educators to provide solid concepts in an activity-oriented approach. Students of all ages test ideas as they work with real equipment and problems. The program calls for handling objects, observing natural phenomena, and trying to explain what has been observed. A basic premise is that a student will remember longer and understand more fully those concepts which are introduced or emphasized to him or her by doing an experiment or procedure which demonstrates the concept to be learned.

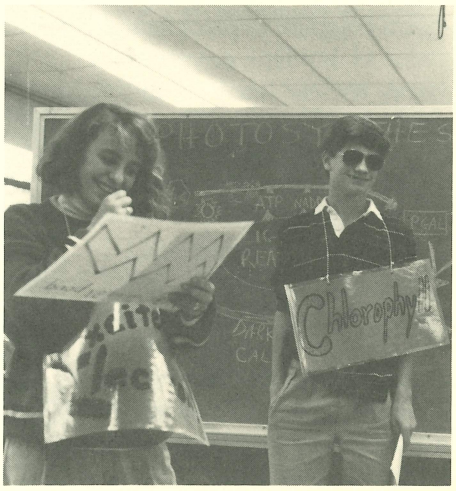
The lower school is fortunate to have its very own lab in which to experiment. 2nd graders in Mrs. Beers' class were seen making solutions of copper chloride and sodium chloride to compare the two. Three superbly equipped laboratories for use in grades 4 through 9 allow for experiences not usually available at these grade levels. An obvious favorite among many students is the opportunity to dissect a wide variety of vertebrates.

Beginning in Grade 4, science classes meet as frequently as other academic classes. Class size is small (14 to 16) so that teachers can give each child individual attention and assure safety.

Since much of the lower and middle school Science sequence involves observation of the natural world, trips often take students out of the laboratory and into the field. Members of the lower school might be seen out on the school grounds, at the Cincinnati Zoo, or spending an afternoon at the Buckley Bird Sanctuary. Every year, 6th graders take a whole week for environmental study at an out-of-town facility. The week of April 4th will find them at Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont, Tennessee. They will be observing, measuring, classifying and describing. With notebook and pencil in hand, our young scientists will be acting out the acronym for the official title of this part of their curriculum: SPIES, Self-Paced Investigations for Elementary Science.

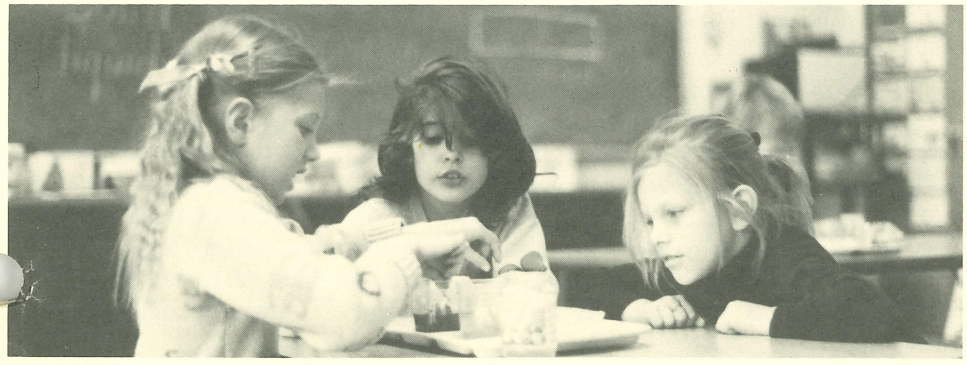
The 7th and 8th grade Science courses continue with the approach introduced in the earlier grades. Experimentation and discussion are used to discover and reinforce some of the basic ideas of science such as energy, work, force, and molecular interactions. The program has been designed to allow the rate of instruction and the scope and sequence of content to vary with the individual student's background, interests and abilities. Students are well grounded for whichever 9th Grade science they elect.

We feel somewhat unique in being able to offer a choice of one of three alternatives in Science to our 9th grade class of 41 students.



Melanie Smith and Karl Stillner ham it up in "It Ain't Easy Being Green," a play about photosynthesis.

This is due, in part, to the fact that Mr. Brown, Mrs. Ford and Mr. Hardesty are certified science teachers. All three are doing what they love to do and each brings expertise and enthusiasm for the subject to the students. The variety of choices is also due to a commitment to meet student needs. Whether it be the combination Biological and Physical Sciences class, the Earth Science class, or the Biology course, placement is based on information about a child's previous performance in science, his or her interests, and high school plans. Mastery of investigative techniques and a repertoire of ideas provide the confidence for 9th graders to engage in relatively free inquiry. This is the goal our Science Department has for every student at The Lexington School.



2nd graders Quanah Simon, Cecelia Mendiondo and Ali McGee observing solutions for a science experiment.

How Our Children Grow: Reflections on Responsibility

Penny Lastinger
Head of lower school

"Do as I say and not as I do." How many times have parents through the ages spoken those words to their children at times when their example wasn't what they hoped it might be? Probably more than once. But how many times have we silently patted ourselves on the back when we set an exemplary model for our children? I'm guessing probably not enough.

An unspoken "Do as I do" is a message that lies at the heart of developing responsible young people. Children in lower school are particularly ready and likely to model the behaviors of the important adults in their lives. They feel very good about themselves when they carry out tasks in an orderly manner or get their work completed on time. Getting ready for school to be there by 8:30 is a lot like Mom or Dad getting ready for work and being on time. Finishing an assignment is much like Mom or Dad fixing dinner and finishing the dishes. Remembering chores just might be modeled on weekend yard work, or laundry, or even on driving carpools!

Being an effective role model is a gift every grownup can give a child. I see lots of "thank you's" in order all the time to the responsible grownups in our children's lives.

Marijo Foster
Head of middle school

I don't know when the "Meadow Party" was born, nor the circumstances of its birth. I first learned about it from a scribbled message that was anonymously and mysteriously placed on my desk. In order to ensure anonymity, the party leaving the message requested that the first few communiques between us be traded in locker 93. The day I invited all of them, by name, to join me for lunch to talk about their ideas, there was plenty of buzzing and whispering about how I knew who they were and who had told. I don't remember exactly how I discovered the identities of those wonderful fifth grade boys, but I do know that it was worth the sleuthing! A new concept of responsibility had evolved in the middle school.

That lunch was the first of several. Over submarine sandwiches or a chili dog, we talked about important things like how students could assume leadership roles and have a better, more inclusive student government. The

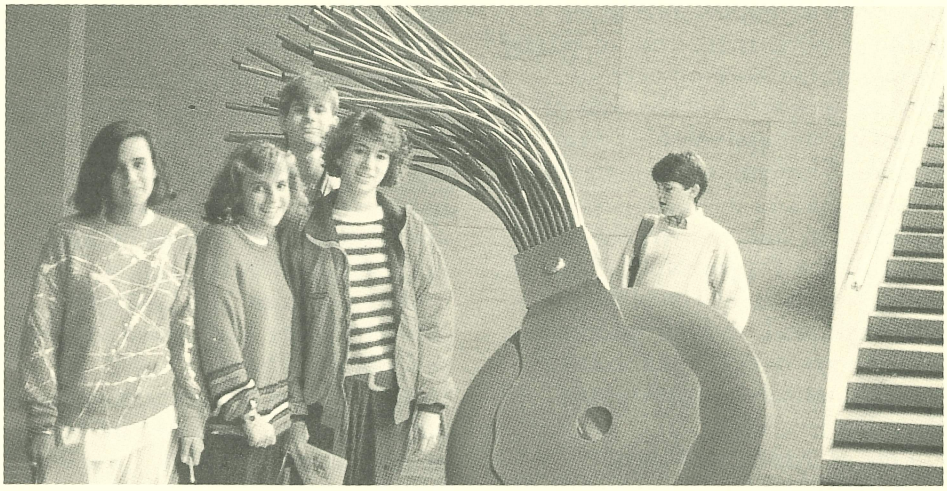
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Hail Columbia! 9th Grade Visits Washington, D.C.

Something sort of magical has happened to the Class of '88. The last week in October they boarded an airplane in Lexington, spent a day in the City of Brotherly Love, and four days in the nation's capitol. They returned home safe and sound and tired. As one young tourist put it, "We consumed a lot."

Throughout the trip, different things impressed different people. Some liked the monuments and memorials the best, while others were enthralled with the tour of the FBI building. The giant tarantula at the Smithsonian was just as popular an attraction as the Hope Diamond! Art lovers melted in the National Gallery while music and drama fans were captured by *Camelot.*

So where's the magic in all this? The sightseeing was exciting and educational, but the magic came from classmates being with each other. Hearts were open to making new friends and old friendships were deepened. "I learned a lot about some of the people in my class that I didn't know before," is a recurring theme in students' journals.



9th graders experience modern art at the National Gallery. (L to R) Mark Elliott, Taylor Keller, Brent Wimberly, Melanie Smith and Anne Kenan.

Mrs. Nichols, head of the upper school, experiences the magic a little differently. She feels the 9th grade trip produces such cohesiveness that the class actually functions better as a result of it. Teamwork is evident in new ways. It's not just a honeymoon either. The feelings last.

Visiting Artists Bring Fairy Tales, Dance, History and Opera to TLS

The Lexington School supplements and enriches its already broad curriculum in the creative arts by bringing in visiting artists for performances and workshops in a variety of media. The first Arts Education Showcase was a presentation of a collection of best-loved stories by Hans Christian Andersen. The 50 minute dramatization, which involved the whole audience, was the work of Lexington Children's Theatre and Theatre School.



Nadine Malluche and Elizabeth Kenan kick up their heels to do the Charleston with Kathy Kramer of Syncopated, Inc

"Dance Crazes of the 20's and 60's" was created by members of Syncopated, Inc. to address, in a fun way, two questions of importance to its authors: what is the role of young people in the development of culture, and what is the role of dance as an expression of that culture? Students waltzed through Vienna, kicked up their heels in Charleston, and twisted the night away at the Peppermint Lounge in an informative, at times hilarious, well-costumed, thought-provoking, and always entertaining tour of various periods of history and their dance crazes.

One of Kentucky's most memorable and colorful historical characters came alive on stage when Steve Wise of Actor's Theatre, Louisville, portrayed The Lion of Whitehall: Cassius Marcellus Clay, in a solo dramatic performance. Students of both history and drama had much to learn. One adult comment was, "unusually entertaining for an educational play... or is that unusually educational for an entertaining play."

To complete the fall season, Opera Go Round, the educational and touring arm of Kentucky Opera, presented *Son of Mikado* in December. The pace was lively and students, as well as faculty, were involved in the action. Volunteers from The Lexington School faculty had joined together to form the Opera's chorus! Decked out in costumes complete with wigs, and prepared by hours of after school rehearsal, our teachers were hardly recognizable as anything less than "the real thing." Students delighted in seeing their faculty in such a different role.

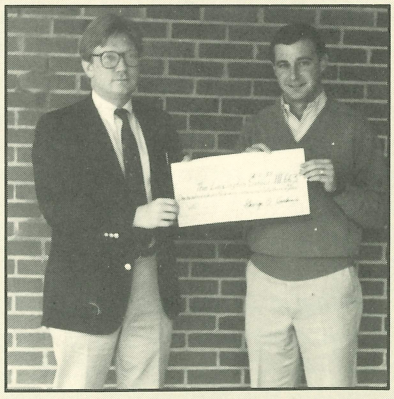
The Lexington School admits students of any race, religion, color, sex, national or ethnic origin.

CELEBRATION — LOOKING BACK

How can people have a good time raising money? Ask anyone who worked on CELEBRATION and they might answer, "Let me count the ways."

The whole experience was just plain fabulous. It was challenging. It was bonding. It was successful beyond our wildest dreams. Over $100,000 was raised.

Kudos one more time to George Hoskins who bravely, graciously and enthusiastically agreed to serve as the first CELEBRATION chairman. George gathered together a group of parents, friends and faculty whose energy to achieve our goals seemed to know no limits. 325 guests spent an evening under the stars enjoying fine foods, spirits, music, the excitement of an auction, and each other.



George Hoskins presents David Lowry with a check for the proceeds of the CELEBRATION.

CELEBRATION celebrated the best in The Lexington School family — commitment to what we want for our children. What began anew will continue in our tradition — October 7, 1988.

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more we talked and problem solved, the more I realized that out of the mouths of these babes were coming recommendations full of wisdom and common sense which showed a remarkable desire for involvement in the school community.

The thinking and talking continued until this fall when voluntary service committees were established to replace the elected form of student government. Now, terrific teachers are guiding eager students in exercises involving leadership and responsibility that we'd never dreamed of ...until the "Meadow Party."

Mary Lee Nichols
Head of upper school

At this special time of year, our thoughts naturally turn to gift giving. Perhaps the most appropriate gift you can give your upper school children is a unique kind of freedom. They need the freedom to enjoy success, experience failure, manage frustration, and realize the follies of their own creation. Now is the time they need to feel free to trust adults other than their parents, to seek advice from friends and teachers, and to weigh the value of what they have heard and learned. Somewhere along the way, responsible adults begin to emerge.

Upper school students are showing us that they are becoming responsible young adults in many ways. Early in the school year our students provided lower and middle schools with an afternoon of fun with their Fall Festival. Some are expressing appreciation for their teachers by providing snacks and treats or by taking our lunchroom duties. 98% of upper school students donated canned goods to The Nest at Thanksgiving. They have assumed the responsibility to collect and help deliver special needs of The Nest for their annual holiday giving. They have proven themselves to be excellent ambassadors for their school, parents, and teachers on numerous school field trips.

Academically, they are willing to admit that grades are earned, not given, that the missed or neglected homework assignment really does result in a formidable zero, and that absences can sometimes create an academic burden. They are learning that teachers are available and eager to help, but that they need to be asked. They realize that mom and dad may no longer be able to do the homework exactly right, because specific instructions were given in class.

The lessons of becoming responsible are both rewarding and frustrating. Letting go and allowing teenagers to learn from their mistakes and to enjoy their successes could be the best gift of all.

THE LEXINGTON SCHOOL
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